

edward johnson building
faculty of music
university of toronto



THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO CONCERT CHOIR

JOHN TUTTLE, CONDUCTOR

WALTER HALL

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1979

3 P.M.

PROGRAM

Singet dem Herrn (BWV 225)

J. S. Bach

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) wrote at least five and possibly all of his six preserved motets during his first ten years as the cantor (music teacher, conductor, and composer) of St. Thomas' church in Leipzig. By this time, the German motet was already considered to be an old-fashioned form. Bach, with all his pressing duties at St. Thomas', including the composition of a new cantata for each Sunday of the year, was probably only too happy to conform to the custom of relying on older compositions by other composers when motets were called for in church. He did, however, consider the motet as an ideal form for the occasion of the death of an important personage. Four of the five Leipzig motets were written for funerals. Singet dem Herrn is the exception. This predominantly joyful work for double chorus was likely written for the birthday of Elector Friedrich August "the Strong" of Saxony, in May of 1727.

Unlike a cantata, a Baroque motet is scored for chorus only (no soloists), and instruments are used only to double the vocal lines. The first movement of Singet dem Herrn is a freely contrapuntal, virtuosic rendering of Psalm 149 ("Sing unto the Lord a new song....let them sing praises with the timbrel and harp").

The second movement, called "aria" is in a more contemplative mood. Choir II sings the third strophe of the chorale "Nun lob mein Seel" (based on Psalm 103). Between its phrases, choir I interjects contrapuntal sections based on an independent text.

The third movement, "Lobet dem Herrn in seinen Taten" (Psalm 150) is again very technically demanding; free polyphonic writing leads into a final fugue on the words "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord". The fugue subject is a snake-like line in 3/8 time, developed elaborately up to the final chordal alleluia. A bar-count of the fugue reveals it to be a perfectly symmetrical arch form.

It is interesting to note that in the years following the death of Bach, during which his music was largely forgotten, this motet remained one of the few works still performed. Mozart, who knew little of Bach's vocal music, heard it in Leipzig in 1789 and according to a contemporary, became seized with a desire to hear more of this music, and would not leave Leipzig until he had read

CONCERT CHOIR, November 11, 1979

CHOIR I

<u>Soprano</u>	<u>Alto</u>	<u>Tenor</u>	<u>Bass</u>
Kim Barber	Marg Chivers	Les Dobbin	Allan Derr
June Crowley	Mary Dempster	Ken Hazlett	Douglas Friesen
Judith Johnson	Sylvia Kerr	David Jafelice	William O'Meara
Leslie Jost	Monica Zerbe	Barry Waterlow	Terry Pratt
Kathy Loree	Melissa Vandendool		James Wells

CHOIR II

<u>Soprano</u>	<u>Alto</u>	<u>Tenor</u>	<u>Bass</u>
Elinor Bartle	Cheryl Carruthers	Danny Eastwood	Tim Carpenter
Megan Brown	Wendy Hedderwick	Brian Gow	Lawrence LeBarge
Kathy Domoney	Robyn Sheppard	David Jellicoe	Ralph McIntosh
Laurel Hodgson	Sung Ha Shin	Len Whiting	Michael Mulrooney
Cathy Terry	Heather Suttie		Apack Song
	Carmen Leger		

CONCERT CHOIR ORCHESTRA

Singet. dem Herrn:

Juergen Petrenko, Organ
Paul Widner, Cello
Catherine Loftin, Contrabass

Lauda per la nativita del Signore:

Anne-Marie Kopp, Flute
Ross Carstairs, Flute and Piccolo
Janet Page, Oboe
Catharine Calderone, English Horn
Shannon Peet, Heather Chesley, Bassoon
Una Doyle, Nadine Harshenin, Piano

In Flanders Fields:

Randall Rosenfeld, Recorder

Christmas Cantata:

Elsbeth Carruthers, Susan Barber, Trumpet
Michael Newnham, Susan Dufan, Trombone

LAST YEAR THE FACULTY OF MUSIC ASKED ITS MANY FRIENDS FOR SUPPORT OF ITS ACTIVITIES. THE RESPONSE TO THIS PLEA WAS GRATIFYING AND THE FACULTY THANKS YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS. OF THE MANY CHALLENGES STILL FACING US, THE MOST TROUBLESOME IS THE NEED TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL AID TO THOSE STUDENTS WHOSE RESOURCES ARE LIMITED. IF YOU WISH TO HELP, WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO DEPOSIT YOUR CONTRIBUTION IN OUR SCHOLARSHIP AND BURSARY FUND. PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO:

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY OF MUSIC

A RECEIPT SUITABLE FOR TAX PURPOSES WILL BE PROVIDED.

Gustav Ciamaga, Dean

Next Concert: Special Pops Concert, U of T Symphony Orchestra,
December 1, 1979, 3 pm, MacMillan Theatre

Next Concert Choir Concert: March 26, 1980, 8 pm, Walter Hall

through everything of Bach's that was there.

Lauda per la nativita del Signore

Ottorino Respighi

Respighi (1879-1936) was born in Bologna, Italy. After graduating from the Liceo Musicale at the age of twenty, he travelled to Russia, where he played violin in the Imperial Opera Orchestra at St. Petersburg, and studied composition with Rimsky-Korsakov. He returned to his native land in 1903, and in subsequent years pursued a career as a violinist, composer, and as a professor of composition at the St. Cecilia Academy in Rome. Although Respighi specialized in vocal music, he is most widely known outside Italy for his symphonic poems, notably Le Fontane di Roma and I Pini di Roma.

Laud to the Nativity was written in 1929 during the composer's "Gregorian phase", when he espoused many forms of early music. The composition is a sacred cantata on a text attributed to the Franciscan monk Jacopone da Todi (c.1230-1306). The composer indicated the possibility of staging, representing an Italian manger scene of the 15th or 16th century, but the work is as often performed in concert. It is scored for three soloists, mixed chorus, winds, triangle and piano four hands.

The oboe and cor anglais open the work with a melody which rises and falls from a tonic E. The Angel (soprano) begins with this same line, which becomes central to the musical unity of the cantata. Proclaiming herself as God's messenger, the Angel announces the birth of Christ. A mixed chorus of angels relates the circumstances of the Messiah's birth; the Angel then tells the awe-stricken shepherds to have no fear.

A shepherd (tenor) prays, apologizing for the poor conditions under which Jesus has been born. Fellow shepherds (men's chorus) join him. Homophonic writing characterizes the shepherds, as behooves their simple station in life, whereas the singing of the angels, both at the beginning and at the end of the cantata, exhibits a wider harmonic vocabulary and is more imitative.

Mary (Mezzo-soprano) sings praise to God, and the chorus of shepherds echoes her sentiments. The final section of the cantata is a rousing Gloria for the angel chorus followed by a recitation of great thanks by the Virgin. The work ends with the Angel proclaiming the glory of God.

INTERMISSION

In Flanders Fields

Derek Healey

Derek Healey was born in 1936 in England. He studied theory, flute, organ, and piano at the Royal College of Music in London, and then studied composition and conducting in Sienna and Rome. He subsequently obtained a Doctor of Music degree from the University of Toronto and taught here in 1971-2. He presently teaches at the University of Guelph.

In Flanders Fields, composed in 1974, is a short work for mixed chorus and solo recorder. The melody instrument articulates the 3 sections of the text which is based on the well-known World War I poem by John McCrae. The climax is reached at the words "if ye break faith with us who died". The recorder repeats its opening phrase to end the work.

Christmas Cantata

Daniel Pinkham

Daniel Pinkham is an American composer who was born in 1923. He studied organ, harpsichord and composition (under Walter Piston) at Harvard, receiving his M.A. in 1944. During the summers he studied at Tanglewood under Copland, Honegger, and Boulanger. He is presently a faculty member of the New England Conservatory of Music.

The Christmas Cantata of 1957 is subtitled "sinfonia sacra", in admission of the musical debt owed to 16th century Venetian composer Giovanni Gabrieli. The influence of Gabrieli is heard in the pitting of brass choir against vocal choir, and in the coloristic use of dissonance.

The first section, "Quem vidistis pastores" is fast and bright, with shifting tonalities and many dissonant chords based on fourths, fifths and seconds. The next section, "O magnum mysterium" is based on a nine note rising and falling motive, and is slow and lyrical. The third movement is a "Gloria in excelsis". It takes the form of a choral rondo, in which the "Gloria", light and quick in G major, is heard at the beginning and after each of the other three fragments. These are a soprano-alto duet, a trio for soprano, alto, and tenor, and a chromatic section for all four voices. The final "Gloria" features an interesting brass melody in counterpoint to the original theme. An "Alleluia" coda completes the cantata.

Notes by Lynn Walsworth